

COMMUNITY COLLEGES GET FUNDING CUTS, HIGHER FEES, THOUSANDS OF DIVERTED UC STUDENTS

Adds up to unavailable classes

Governor Schwarzenegger proposes to increase community college fees 44%, from \$18 to \$26 per unit. While the increased fees may seem reasonable, experience shows that every one-dollar increase in fees results in 100,000 fewer students enrolling in community colleges. The current \$18 per credit hour already represents a 64% increase over last year.

In addition to sharply raising fees at all higher education institutions, Governor Schwarzenegger has proposed to divert 10,000 students eligible to attend the University of California and California State University to community colleges. But the cruel fact is that many of those students will not get in to the community colleges, or to the courses they need.

“Those students are going to wake up sometime between today and September and figure out there’s no room,” says Mark Drummond, chancellor of the California community college system.

Many classes for the fall are already filled. The lack of access will be particularly acute for core classes needed to obtain an AA degree or qualify to transfer to a four-year university. At Delta College in Stockton, half of the fall classes were already full by the time open registration began. At Merced College, about 90 percent of the sections closed are courses that transfer to a four-year school, such as English and computer science. (Melanie Turner, “Community college room is short,” *Modesto Bee*, 5/21/04)

Cutting staff hours and eliminating course sections is no way to prepare for a massive influx of students, but that’s what is happening at many community colleges. Santa Rosa Junior College is cutting \$700,000 in staff services. Classified staff, including janitors, instructional aides, lab assistants, computer technicians, accountants, secretaries and others are losing hours or pay from their jobs. Students will receive less help obtaining financial aid, registering, getting their academic

(Continued page 2)

University of California

No Longer Available To Those Who Qualify

The compact between Governor Schwarzenegger and UC President Robert Dynes has eaten away at the core mission of the University. By offloading courses and students to community colleges while raising UC fees, the University has punished students from deprived socio-economic and educational backgrounds, and “annihilated” the promise of the Master Plan.

These were among the conclusions formed by statewide UC-AFT lecturers’ union President Kevin Roddy about the “convenient” shifting of the teaching burden to already-strapped community colleges.

Students lucky enough to be admitted to the University of California will be paying 14% more in undergraduate fees, the third increase for students in 18 months. The regents raised fees by \$700, to \$5,684. The 14% comes on top of 40% increases between December 2002 and July 2003. Undergraduate fees would rise 8% more in each of the next two years under the agreement reached between Governor Schwarzenegger and UC President Robert Dynes.

Students who do find a place on a UC campus, and cough up the extra fees, will find some required courses unavailable to them. At UC Riverside, administrators have eliminated the Basic Writing program in the English Department that has delivered “Subject A” preparation for the past one hundred years. All UC students are still required to pass the Subject A exam or its equivalent within their first year of study at UC. But the course will no longer be offered on campus, even though more than 2,000 UC Riverside students need it each year.

“More than 60% of incoming UC Riverside students cannot write standard college English,” says lecturer Stephanie Kay. “How are students supposed to meet this requirement now that the Subject A program is being abolished? This has

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COMMUNITY COLLEGES (From page 1)

records and getting access to clean and working facilities. (Carol Benfell, "SRJC may cut 12 staff positions," *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, 5/3/04 and 5/14/04)

Community college and university students have been protesting the cuts and fee increases. At California State University Stanislaus, students set up a dunk tank with the governor's picture as a target. A long line of students waited for their chance to demonstrate further their unhappiness with his proposal.

Students from Sacramento's Los Rios Community College District delivered petitions and letters of protest to the governor. Community college students have also created 120 statues of missing students, representing those for whom the college doors have been closed. The statues have been camped out on the steps of the Capitol to remind legislators of the consequences of their actions.

Marty Hittelman, president of the CFT Community College Council, has said that the community colleges are already overburdened: "Currently we're expecting 150,000 commu-

nity college students that we lost from fall 2002 to fall 2003 to return, increasing pressure on existing classes. And on top of that, UC and Cal State are expecting the community colleges to serve their redirected students. Compounding the problem, the community colleges are already serving 2 percent of their students without funding."



Dennis Smith, President of Los Rios College Federation of Teachers, stands with member of California Student Association of Community Colleges in front of the float of "missing students" prior to march protesting escalating fees and restricted access to the community college system on March 15 in Sacramento. Photo by Jon Akana

A report by the Public Policy Institute of California found California ranked 45th out of 49 states in spending per community college student in 1999-2000. This state funds community colleges less generously per student than every other state except Arkansas, Tennessee, Nevada, and Virginia.

The CFT Community College Council has adopted the following budget advocacy package:

- 2.41% COLA (as in governor's May Revise)
- Equalization at \$59.8 million (governor's May Revise at \$80 million), with a portion of the funds earmarked to increase full-time faculty
- Enrollment growth at 3.65% (.65% higher than governor's May Revise, about \$27 million)
- Increase Non-Credit rate \$6 million (\$2 million above governor's May Revise)
- All categoricals except Partnership for Excellence to stay as categoricals

Plus the following items:

- No increase in fees from \$18 per unit (about \$93 million)
- Part-time faculty health insurance at the Board of Governors' proposed \$4.2 million (governor's May Revise was at \$1 million)
- Part-time faculty office hours at the Board of Governors' proposed \$9.872 million (governor's May Revise was at \$7.17 million)
- Part-time faculty salary equity at the Board of Governors' proposed \$54.44 million (governor's May Revise was at \$50.83 million).

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA (From page 1)

been a remarkably effective program, and critical for the success of minority students." UC Riverside has the highest proportion of students of color of any campus in the UC system. The cost-cutting move has resulted in the loss of more than forty Writing Program lecturers.

At UC Berkeley, the English Language Program (ELP), one of the nation's most prestigious centers for foreigners to come and learn the English language, has been closed. Twenty-six excellent instructors have been lost. The program regularly attracted 2,000 elite students every year from across the globe. The program lost about \$400,000 last year, but administrators stress the cut was not financially motivated. If not, what other reason can be believed?

"High school grads have studied and sacrificed to get the grades the state promised would earn them admission to the University of California or Cal State University. Now they're being told to take a hike—for essentially chicken feed savings. This is not the kind of thinking that made California great – that, beginning early in the 20th century, provided affordable college educations to every qualified student in order to develop a skilled, innovative workforce and give young people a chance to fulfill their dreams." George Skelton, Los Angeles Times, 5/17/2004

EDUCATORS TAKE ON GOVERNOR OVER OUTSOURCING

Proposal to repeal standards on outsourcing school services stirs opposition

Outsourcing. The word has become part of our new economic vocabulary. Americans have become accustomed to seeing jobs shipped overseas to be done by people who make in a week what American workers make in an hour or a day. But Californians are balking at outsourcing school support services to international corporations looking for new profit centers.

Food from Burger King. Books from Barnes & Noble. Buses from Laidlaw. Janitorial services from some company that operates at night. Minimum wage earners replacing long-time school employees who have an investment in the school that goes beyond the next quarterly profit statement. That's the school community that Governor Schwarzenegger envisions. No longer would the school custodian be someone who also lives in the community, possibly has children going to the school, or did, and is on campus all day providing support for the students, teachers, staff and community groups.

Gov. Schwarzenegger wishes to repeal 10 key standards enacted in SB 1419 that help limit outsourcing of school services (see Insert Page 2). The law requires that districts engage in competitive bidding, ensure that contract employees are qualified to perform the job, and show that real cost savings can be achieved before contracting out a service. It minimizes the risk of contract rate increases and requires school districts to contract with legitimate companies, eliminating sweetheart deals and no-bid contracts. These standards protect taxpayers and the school community from unwarranted outsourcing. This 2002 law requires that school districts follow the same standards that every state agency must follow before outsourcing public services to private companies. The protections ensure stability and quality in the delivery of school services. The law requires that districts engage in competitive bidding, ensure that contract employees are qualified to perform the job, and show that real cost savings can be achieved before contracting out a service.

Private companies love public contracts to provide services. They give campaign contributions to elected officials, and hope to win business in return. To protect against corruption and cronyism, the legislature enacted protections designed to ensure that the public, and not just corporations and politicians, benefits when tax dollars are awarded to private businesses. Is there a true savings for the public? Or is the contract built solely on lowering wages to unsustainable levels, winning a contract, and then jacking up the price

later? That is a common occurrence when private businesses try to win public contracts.

The promised benefits of contracting out often disappear as the contract unfolds. After all, when turning public services over to private companies, the public is ADDING a cost factor – profits – that did not exist before.

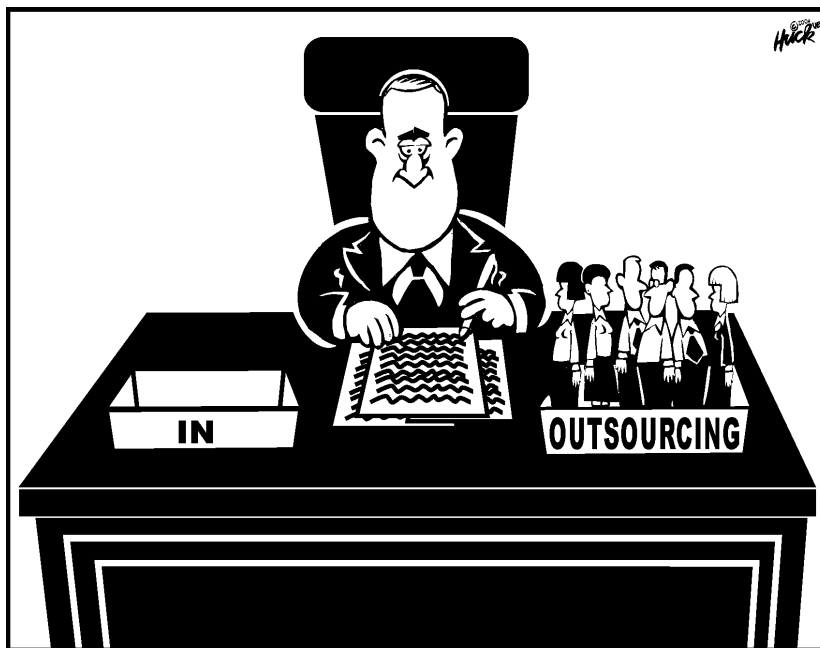
With inadequate funding from the state, federal and local agencies, many districts have turned to outsourcing to try to make ends meet. Districts can get out from under union wages, pensions and health care benefit obligations. But does that mean that workers no longer need to earn a living wage,

won't grow old and won't get sick? Of course not. The private contractor failing to provide these minimum levels of compensation is shifting that responsibility onto the taxpayers. Someone is going to pay for a sick child of one of these workers. Many low-wage contractors actively assist their underpaid employees in signing up for public aid programs!

Someone is going to take care of that worker upon retirement. Increases in welfare,

MediCal and other public assistance are costs that are shifted from the school district and the contractor to the taxpayers.

School support workers traveled to the State Capitol in early May to present their case to the State Assembly Committee on Public Employees and Retirement in opposition to AB 2992 (McCarthy) that would have repealed the guidelines. The bill failed to win majority support in the committee, but the governor has said that he will pursue repeal in the budget process. 🏛️



California Education Math

As of 2001-2002 (the most recent statistics available):

California ranked ninth out of the top ten most populous states in per pupil funding. New York spent over \$11,400 per student, and California \$7,324. The national average of all states was \$8,087. (*EdSource, August 2003*)

Visualize an inner city elementary school with 350 students. If this were New York, the budget of that school would be just under \$4 million. In California, it's just over \$2.5 million. What would \$1.5 million buy for these children? For one thing, lower class sizes. Even after class-size reduction in K-3, California ranks third worst in teacher-pupil ratio. Among the ten most populous states, California is still dead last.

SB 1419 PROTECTS STUDENTS & TAXPAYERS

SB 1419 establishes 10 important guidelines for school districts to follow before contracting out for school services. **School districts can contract out for classified services as long as they meet these specified criteria.** These guidelines are the same guidelines that every state agency and division must comply with prior to contracting out services. These guidelines have been in place for decades in state service and were established to protect taxpayer dollars.

Ten Guidelines in SB 1419

1. Proof of overall savings from contracting out classified services.
2. Proof that the contractor's pay rates and benefits meet industry standards.
3. Proof that the bidding process is competitive and well-publicized.
4. Proof that existing workers are not displaced, but allows outside contractors to hire them to meet this requirement.
5. Proof that contract employees are qualified to perform the jobs.
6. Proof that savings justify the size and duration of the contracts.
7. Proof that the savings are large enough to ensure that they will not be eliminated by normal cost fluctuation.
8. Proof that the economic gains from contracting out are greater than the public interest in having a public function be performed in-house.
9. Proof that the future economic risk to the school district from potential contractor rate increases is minimal.
10. Proof that the contract is with a legitimate firm.

SB 1419 Gives School Districts Flexibility to Meet Their Needs

SB 1419 allows school districts to continue any contracted service initiated prior to Jan. 1, 2003. It also provides several exceptions to allow for district flexibility, and does not apply to any service other than those currently or customarily performed by classified school employees.

SB 1419 allows school districts to contract out for classified services without meeting the above criteria, as long as they satisfy **ANY** of the following exemptions:

- Services are not available within the district
- Services are highly specialized or technical in nature
- Services require expert knowledge or experience
- Services are for administrative or legal purposes
- Services are for emergencies
- Services are urgent, temporary or occasional in nature

“Good teachers understand what parents want and students need. Yet, too often, teachers are left out of the decision-making process and forced to accept the latest education fads and top-down reforms.” Mary Bergan, President, California Federation of Teachers

RESEARCH BRIEFS

Summaries of recent education research

Annual MetLife Survey finds that teachers and parents hold similar views of schools, but their views differ sharply from those of principals

The latest annual MetLife survey (MetLife Survey of the American Teacher 2003) found that principals are much more positive about the characteristics of their schools than are teachers and parents. What's more, principals claim that they spend most of their time working to improve student achievement – an assertion that is at odds with the observations of teachers and parents.

Observers may disagree about whether principals spend too much time on paperwork or are out of touch with the community, but everyone who cares about improving education knows that teachers belong at the center of school reform efforts.

There is a lesson here for those (for example, California Education Secretary Dick Riordan) who believe that students are best served when principals have complete control of schools. Good teachers understand what parents want and students need. Yet, too often, teachers are left out of the decision-making process and forced to accept the latest education fads and top-down reforms.

ONE STEP FORWARD, TWO STEPS BACK: K-12 SCHOOLS GET \$2 BILLION CUT

Another year of cuts, closings and scrimping to get by



What does it say when kindergarten through twelfth grade educators absorb another cut, this time \$2 billion,

and consider themselves to have gotten off easier than expected?

It doesn't seem like such a great deal to the 46 San Francisco teachers' aides who have been laid off. These aides help English-learning children understand what's going on in their classroom. What will happen to those children?

As often happens, those nearest the bottom of the earnings scale are the first to go. In San Francisco, this means minority classified employees who work with minority kids. Even classified employees who have 20 years of experience are being targeted for layoff.

Bradley Reeves, vice-president of the United Educators of San Francisco, said the layoffs are doing great damage to the quality of public education in San Francisco: "These are the folks who are bilingual. They're taking kids aside in small groups. Sometimes they're acting like disciplinarians. They've always been a vital part of the school community, but they're going the way of the dodo." (Heather Knight, "Budget woes force school board to cut 46 teacher's aides," *San Francisco Chronicle* 5/29/04)

Across the Bay, in Oakland, seven fasting protesters seeking more funding for California schools took their hunger strike to the state Capitol. The activists began their water-only fast May 10 in part to protest a deal between Gov. Schwarzenegger and state education leaders in which schools would receive \$2 billion less than they are owed under Proposition 98.

In Sacramento, scores of veteran teachers received "March 15" (potential layoff) notices because they have not earned a special credential to teach English learners. One of several teachers at a high-achieving school who received March 15 notices has worked for the city school district for 15 years. The teacher had completed course work to earn the equivalent of a Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development (or CLAD) certificate, which has been a key part of a statewide push for highly qualified teachers. The teacher told district officials that her paperwork is stuck in a four-to-six-month backlog at the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. (Erika Chavez, *Sacramento Bee*, 5/03/04)

Cuts to city budgets are also impacting schools. In Burlingame, a proposal to eliminate eight school crossing guards for a total savings of \$32,000 is putting hundreds of children in danger. "We're talking about elementary school kids, 5-year-olds through 11-year-olds," said Liz Gindraux, president of the Parents & Teachers Association at Washington Elementary School, who has three children enrolled in the district. "The kids can't cross themselves on the street. I'd hate to think what the cost to the city would be if there was one accident and one child was injured. The lawsuit would put the city into bankruptcy. We probably have more kids walking to school than anywhere else in the area.

(Charlie Goodyear, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 5/3/04)

The series of school funding cuts has put the credit ratings of nine California school districts in jeopardy.

Fifty-seven California school districts have money troubles, and may not be able to pay their bills – four times as many as five years ago. There is no end in sight to the districts' money woes.

If districts are unable to meet their financial obligations, the state takes over. The state offers Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance, and those experts have never been busier. "We literally get a telephone or email every single day" from school districts asking for help managing their finances. Those districts that are staying afloat are doing so by cutting programs, increasing class sizes, laying off employees or eliminating jobs.

Several factors have combined to put districts in a critical financial squeeze, including soaring medical insurance premiums, declining enrollment, and unanticipated increases in high-cost items such as special education.

The cash-strapped state, meanwhile, has been paying schools about 90 cents on the dollar with a promise of future refunds. The state has also stopped reimbursing schools for extra employees needed to comply with state mandates – from testing to immunization. (Nanette Asimov, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 4/4/04)

The financial squeeze facing districts is taking a toll on their credit ratings. Standard & Poor's has refused to give one California district a positive credit outlook. In the Bay Area, three school districts received a negative outlook – Livermore, Benicia and Berkeley. Poor credit ratings mean that school districts will pay more to borrow funds, and will have more trouble doing business. (Eric Louie, *Contra Costa Times*, 4/27/04)

While the governor and the Legislature fail to adequately fund education, local citizens are stepping up to take action on their own.

The Martinez Unified School District board is considering whether to put a parcel tax on the November ballot in an effort to avoid deep program cuts. The eight-school district is facing a budget gap of \$600,000 to \$1 million. (Kiley Russell, *Contra Costa Times*, 5/24/04)

At the federal level, the No Child Left Behind Act has imposed strict accountability without resources. It looks as if Gov. Schwarzenegger is moving down that same path. Students, teachers, support staff and administrators are paying the price up and down the state. Quality education is not cheap, but the alternative has its own high price.

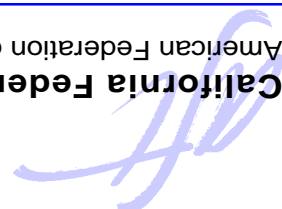
The CFT has urged the governor and the legislature to raise revenues to fund quality education.

Is anyone out there listening? 



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California Federation of Teachers
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO



Cutbacks in higher education and K-12 schools are downsizing the dreams of thousands of students. We should be investing in the future, not saddling the next generation with debt. Our youth hold the key to a better California. Let's be realistic about what the state needs to do to give them the education they need, and the future all Californians deserve.

Mary Bergan, President, California Federation of Teachers



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